

EXCERPTS FROM THE OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL  
(NUREMBERG TRIBUNAL)  
26 April 1946

Cross-Examination of Hans Bernd Gisevius  
By Mr. Justice Jackson

(pp. 8450-8452)

Q. There was never any doubt in the minds of all of you men who were in the resistance movement, was there, that the attack on Poland of September 1939 was aggression on Hitler's part?

A. No, no there could be no doubt about that.

Q. And that diplomatic means of righting whatever wrongs Germany felt she suffered in reference to the Corridor and Danzig had not been exhausted?

A. I can only point to the existing material. There was no will for peace.

Q. Now, in the German resistance movement, as I understand you, there was agreement that you wanted to obtain modifications of the Treaty of Versailles and you also wanted various economic betterments for Germany, just as other people wanted them. That was always agreed upon, was it not?

A. We were all agreed that in Europe the center of balance could be achieved if certain modifications of the Versailles Treaty would be carried through in a diplomatic way.

Q. Your difference from the Nazi group was chiefly, in reference to that matter, one of method.

A. Yes.

Q. From the very beginning, as I understand you, it was the position of your group that a war would result disastrously for Germany as well as the rest of the world.

A. Yes.

Q. And that the necessary modifications, given a little patience, could be brought about by peaceful means.

A. Absolutely.

Q. Now, it was in the light of that difference of opinion, I suppose, that your resistance movement against the regime in power in Germany carried out these proposals for putsches and assassinations which you have described.

A. Yes, but I would like to supplement that by saying that we were not only thinking of the great danger to the outside, but we also realized what internal dangers would be brought about by such a system of terror. From the very beginning, there was a group of people in Germany who were not even thinking of the possibility of war, and still they protested against the deprivation of liberty and the fight against religion.

In the beginning, therefore, it was not a fight against war, but if I may say so it was a fight for the rights of man. From the very first moment on, in all classes of the nation, in all professional circles and in all other groups, there were people who were ready to fight for that idea, to suffer, and to die.

Q. Now, the question may arise here as to what your motives and what your purposes in this resistance movement were with reference to the German people, and I shall ask you to state to the Tribunal your over-all purposes in resisting the government in power in your country.

- A. I should like to say that there was such a rich harvest of deaths among the members of the resistance movement that it is only for that reason I sit here, and that otherwise men who were more able could give this answer.

Within that limitation, I feel that I can answer that from right to left, whether Jew or Christian in Germany, there were people who believed in the freedom of religion, in human rights and human dignity, not only for Germany, but also, in their responsibility as Germans, for Europe and the world.

- Q. There was a group which composed this resistance, as I understand it.

- A. It was not only a group, but many individuals carried the secret of their resistance silently to their death.

- Q. Most of the men who were associated with you in this movement are dead?

- A. Almost all of them.

- Q. Is there anything you would like to add to clarify your position to the Tribunal, Dr. Gisevius?

- A. Excuse me.

- Q. Is there anything you would like to add in order that the Tribunal may understand your position in this, your feeling, your very strong feeling in this matter, to understand and appraise your own relation to this situation?

- A. I do not like to talk of myself, but I want to thank you, Mr. Prosecutor, for giving me an opportunity to speak for those who are dead and those who are alive, and to certify for their actions.

MR. JUSTICE JACKSON: I have concluded the examination.